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Source: *Utopian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1998), pp. 68-79

Published by: [Penn State University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20719743>

Accessed: 01-03-2016 06:48 UTC

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Building the City, Structuring Change: Portland's Implicit Utopian Project

BRADSHAW HOVEY

AMONG AMERICAN URBAN PLANNERS, Portland, Oregon, is increasingly celebrated as a kind of planning utopia. Within the planning profession, and beyond, Portland is seen as a practical demonstration of how good planning, effective citizen participation, and regional growth management can produce what is commonly referred to as a good "quality of life." As one journalist wrote recently, "every week of the year, somebody arrives in Portland from far away, wanting to know the secrets of big-city livability" (Ehrenhalt 20). Indeed, Portland is widely recognized as a leader in downtown redevelopment, neighborhood revitalization, historic preservation, urban design control, mass transit development, and regional growth management (Oliver). Elected officials, planners and urban managers flock from around the country, look at Portland, and wonder "why can't we do that?"

The answer is that there is no necessary reason why not. In the middle 1960s Portland was a stodgy town in a beautiful landscape, and more or less as vulnerable to the problems of urban decline and suburban growth as any other place in America (Peirce). What they have achieved, and what they are recognized for today, is the product of no less than 30 years of cumulative work toward a widely-shared and continuously discussed vision of what life in Portland could and should be. Few there call it "utopian," but it is.

In pursuing this vision, they have directly challenged most of the central assumptions about the structural constraints to achieving more livable cities: that downtowns must recede in prominence in favor of "Edge Cities," the highway-oriented agglomerations of suburban office, retail and residential space usurping the functions of historical downtowns (Garreau); that central city neighborhoods will decay, be annihilated intentionally, and then redeveloped in what is described as a natural process of evolution; and that the regime of automobile, highway, and low-density suburban development is irreversible, either because of technology, theologized "market forces," or because of the efforts of metropolitan "growth machines" (Logan and Molotch; Gottdiener).

My suggestion here is that Portland has effectively opposed these structural constraints, and achieved a more attractive urban way of life, through a long series of "structuring" events and projects. In the first instance these efforts directly challenged the structural status quo. But having succeeded in their original challenge, they have created in the second instance, a new

structural context for action which makes a different and more desirable set of outcomes more likely than before. Not only do they “play the game,” but they also re-write the rules.

Moreover, it is not merely material acts in the urban landscape which propel this process (restoring a neighborhood, building light rail transit, or removing a waterfront highway, which they have done), nor the organizational achievements that accompany them (structures of citizen participation, land use control agencies, which they have created). It is also the story that citizens of Portland tell about themselves and their achievements which at one stage can envision and propose the challenge to structural constraints, but at another stage enforce new social structures that allow them to further pursue a more attractive way of urban life (Seltzer).

In its most distilled form, Portland’s story about itself is that the quality of urban spaces and places is of great importance to their community; that a combination of strong public leadership, informed planning practice and robust democratic life is necessary to achieve it; and that Portland is somehow different and better than other cities in that they have been able to overcome many of the major negative trends in urban development that others have suffered. It is important to keep in mind that Portland’s story about itself—or any community’s story about itself—is more than a concatenation of events, outcomes, and key players. In Portland’s case, at least, it is also partly a myth or legend which carries a message about what kind of people Portlanders are, what the community values and what it opposes, about the right and the wrong way to do things in Portland, what it means to be a member of the community, and ultimately, what kind of a city they collectively wish to be. As such, the story is not just a tale to tell, but a powerful instrument with the capacity to celebrate past victories, to honor heroes, to warn future participants about right and wrong conduct, and to instruct outsiders about how things ought to be done. (See Forester, 1989, regarding “communicative action.”)

As an outsider doing research there, I found Portlanders took an intense and proprietary interest in what people thought, said, and wrote about them. I think this was not mainly a matter of vanity—although all communities like to be viewed in a positive way—but part of their understanding that the story matters, and that the meanings, values and knowledge embedded in the story need to be interpreted in a way the tellers deem correct. Otherwise, the power of the story might be misused. Portlanders are not the only ones who participate in the propagation of their story, however. Every newspaper or magazine reporter, every urban scholar, every visiting politician and administrator, every tourist, may join in the telling. And they do, often less critically than Portland’s greatest chauvinists. Either way, the moral of the story comes, not at the end, but throughout the story, tightly woven into the description of each act.

For many outside observers, the story of Portland’s progress begins with its landmark 1972 Downtown Plan. In retrospect, the plan should be seen, not only as a document, but as incorporating a kind of local social

movement. It organized a wide variety of community interests to work not merely for rebuilding the city's central business district—a place for office jobs—but to recreate downtown Portland as the diverse and vital center of the entire region, a place for art, entertainment, education, recreation, and residence as well as commerce.

Downtown Planning

The story of material achievements produced as a result of the 1972 Downtown Plan, and later the Central City Plan (1988), is now worn smooth in repeated retellings. They reversed the erosion of transit service to downtown, first with the 5th and 6th Avenue bus mall, later with a new light rail loop, and they protected downtown from being overrun with cars by imposing a cap on parking. They reclaimed the Willamette River waterfront with the removal of the Harbor Freeway and creation of Tom McCall Park. They invested heavily in public art and improvements to the pedestrian environment and they began to control urban design toward making public spaces more hospitable. They created Pioneer Courthouse Square, one of the most inviting public spaces anywhere. And they began the work of making downtown Portland a place to live again by fostering creation of new housing for a wide range of income groups. The overall result was a massive increase in office space and growth in the downtown's share of the regional retail market (Ehrenhalt, 21).

This version of the story, however, omits most of what makes the Portland case instructive. It's really just an urban development "box score." A fuller story explains how they did what they did by revealing the values and meanings which motivated their actions. There are many possibilities here, but the issues which seem most crucial include the importance of strong public leadership, the centrality of robust citizen participation, the value of professional planning expertise, and the importance of challenging assertions of what is impossible, unrealistic or infeasible.

The telling of a fuller story begins by acknowledging the role of key public leaders, chief among them Neil Goldschmidt, who served as Mayor of Portland from 1973 to 1979. The 1972 Downtown Plan had been in the works for several years and was adopted at about the same time that Goldschmidt first took office. But he had been involved in its creation up until that point, and the plan reflected his own vision of a more vital center city with strong neighborhoods in a region which was shaped more by public transit and less by automobiles (Abbott, *Portland*, 180). That is, part of his vision was that the structural constraints facing cities could be overcome and that a new definition of what is in the public interest could be approached through robust citizen participation and good professional planning practice.

No story about planning in Portland can be told without also honoring the role of citizen participation. The 1972 Downtown Plan started as a fairly conventional business-based effort to rescue property values jeopardized by suburban competition. But a strenuous public demand for broader participation

forced the creation of a citizens advisory committee that was not only broadly representative of the community but was open at a subcommittee level to any citizen who wanted to join (Peirce & Guskind, 57). The impact that change had on the substance of the plan can be seen in the history of Pioneer Courthouse Square. It was the site of the future public square where, in a sense, work on the Downtown Plan began. When the downtown economy sagged in the mid-1960s the response of property owners and retailers was to increase the supply of parking, in one proposal to replace the two-story garage across from the historic Pioneer Courthouse with a gargantuan 12-story parking structure. Public reaction against the proposal not only killed the idea, but helped lead to broader-based planning. When the plan itself emerged it included a proposal to use the one-block site as a new public square. And when the square was finally created it was a grass-roots movement of citizens that insisted on its construction and began the fund-raising for it—against the opposition of then-Mayor Frank Ivancie, who believed that it was more than the city could afford (Peirce and Guskind, 71). Pioneer Courthouse Square was opened in 1984, and has since become the “living room” of downtown Portland, and physical symbol of the community.

The 1972 Downtown Plan set the local standard for citizen participation practice; the sponsors of the subsequent Central City Plan were intent on exceeding that standard. The prime mover behind this planning process was City Commissioner Margaret Strachan, who saw a crucial distinction between the “citizen advisory committee” which oversaw the creation of the 1972 plan, and the “citizen steering committee” which directed the creation of the 1988 Central City Plan. In the latter case, citizens, not planners or political leaders, were at the center. During the process Strachan told an audience of professional planners: “We are attempting what few American cities have: creating a new kind of planning process . . . The process we’re using turns the traditional planning role upside down. It starts with citizens, is driven by them, is controlled by them and approved by them. The planner serves as guide, skilled professional, and pencil for the public” (Hovey, 43). This “citizen driven” process was not without its problems, however. The planning—especially lengthy deliberations by the Citizen Steering Committee—took a very long time. Before the work was finished, Strachan was defeated for reelection and the City Commissioner who assumed control of the Portland Planning Bureau gave the professionals back much of the responsibility for process management which had been taken from them. However, the plan was completed, adopted, and carried many of the aspirations of those who participated.

In part, this was because citizen participation is taken seriously in Portland, and it would have been unseemly to disregard the work of the citizens (Clavel and Krumholz). But it was also because planning itself is taken seriously, and because professional planning is solidly institutionalized there. Professional planning picked up where the citizens left off, incorporated the vision statements, the various goals and objectives, and the many concrete ideas generated by the citizen steering committee, and assembled them into

a workable plan. They made sure that each action item could be matched with an agency sponsor with the ability to carry the work through, and translated the land use and urban design objectives identified by citizens into the technical and legal language needed to put the plan into effect. In a different city, the plan might have been scrapped, or work started over, or key items disowned. But in Portland, where leadership, participation, and professional planning are mutually respected, such an outcome would have transgressed the community's story about itself (Hovey).

The Neighborhood Revolution

Thirty years ago Portland was little different from other American cities with regard to neighborhood planning. It had a central and powerful redevelopment function (the Portland Development Commission) and a fairly conventional approach to urban renewal. Following the orthodoxy of the day, they believed that when close-in neighborhoods decayed, government should use its power to hasten the inevitable process of wholesale redevelopment. Land would be acquired, "dilapidated" housing demolished, and the land turned over to developers who would create new and modern neighborhoods.

But, as in many other cities, the residents of neighborhoods targeted for urban renewal in Portland held a very different view, not only of what was good for their own neighborhood, but also of what possibilities the dynamics of neighborhood change would allow. They asserted that neighborhoods might decay, but not necessarily so, and that they might also be regenerated. In any case, the residents insisted that their neighborhoods retained great value for the incumbents. Opposition to urban renewal schemes in Portland emerged, and while this was not unique to Portland, the neighborhood resistance in the late 1960s and early 1970s was but the beginning of a much longer story about what urban neighborhoods might be, and how they might act on their own accounts.

Conventional notions about the "natural" fate of neighborhoods were first contradicted in Portland by citizens in neighborhoods like Lair Hill Park. This "triangle of twenty small blocks wedged between high-volume traffic arteries just south of downtown Portland . . . three dozen commercial buildings . . . scattered among one hundred residences," was designated by urban renewal officials as appropriate for clearance and redevelopment as early as 1957. In 1970, the Portland City Council approved a plan to clear the neighborhood entirely, redesign the street system, and build new student housing. Preservation of the neighborhood, redevelopment officials said at the time, would only prolong "inefficient land use" and the lives of aging buildings (Abbott, *Portland*, 183–184), but the residents found values in this neighborhood that redevelopment officials did not. They moved in, or stayed, and renovated the 19th century housing stock. They fought the urban renewal plan, insisting that City Hall deal with them as a legitimate player in the controversy, then delaying the plan long enough so that it lost its funding when the Nixon administration cut off money for urban renewal.

Subsequently they organized their own plan for Lair Hill Park and two adjacent neighborhoods, and with the help of professionals in the Portland Planning Bureau, and elected leaders like Goldschmidt, the neighbors' plan was adopted and its provisions given the force of law. In 1977, Lair Hill Park was designated as a historic preservation district, and today, the neighborhood once described as "extremely blighted" is seen as a good place to live, and certainly to own a home (Abbott, *Portland*, 183–186).

Residents in other parts of Portland wrote similar stories for their own neighborhoods. In the Northwest District, residents fought an urban renewal plan intended to allow the expansion of a major hospital and a large commercial enterprise and demanded that they be part of the decision-making process. When the urban renewal plan was scrapped, they also insisted on creating their own plan, one aimed at preserving the urban residential values of the neighborhood. In the Irvington neighborhood, residents organized to oppose "block-busting" by real estate agents seeking profits on the racial turnover of the neighborhood. The effort maintained Irvington as a thoroughly integrated neighborhood, which it remains today.

The neighborhood movement in Portland, however, went far beyond insurgency. The residents' demands for effective participation and for new planning values was institutionalized fairly early on. Elected officials like Goldschmidt and Lloyd Anderson both responded to and led the neighborhood movement, first calling for official acknowledgement of neighborhood associations in the planning process, and soon after creating a structure to facilitate that participation on a continuing basis. The Office of Neighborhood Associations was created by the city council in 1974 to provide a means for providing neighborhood associations with information and technical assistance, and to organize their participation in budget-making, neighborhood planning, and land-use regulation. It quickly became routine for developers to go to the neighborhood associations to air their proposals before asking for official approval downtown at City Hall. Neighborhood associations demanded and got city assistance in conducting their own planning and made those plans law. Over the course of less than a decade, Portland's regime of professional, top-down neighborhood planning was thoroughly replaced with a neighborhood-based planning system in which residents worked hard to keep professional planners on a short leash (Berry, Portney and Thomson; Clary; Abbott, *Portland*, 204–206).

This is not to say professional planning expertise is disparaged in Portland. Over the past three decades, the Planning Bureau has more often been enlarged than it has been scaled back. Neighborhood organizations have fought for professional resources. But as was seen in the Central City Plan process, there has been an argument over what is the appropriate role for planners in a democratic system. Portland's neighborhood associations have honored planning knowledge over the years. Active citizens display a strong grasp of the regulatory process for land use, or of the interconnections between land use, transportation, and regional growth management. But they have also worked hard to make sure that planners pursue the neighbor-

hood's agenda, rather than the agenda of City Hall, the Planning Bureau, or the profession.

Three decades after the earliest neighborhood insurgencies, the movement has matured, been structured as a part of city government, and has been institutionalized. It is common for members of the city council to have been neighborhood association officers in the past. The institutionalization of neighborhood planning has proceeded so far that the "radicals" of the early years are now sitting on the council while the heirs of the conservatives who decried the "neighborhood revolution" are now on the outside, forced to use the neighborhood system as the most readily available venue in which to pursue their agenda.

Planning the Region

American urbanists have been complaining about "urban sprawl" since at least shortly after the end of the Second World War. The growth of vast suburban areas, segregated by land use and stratified by race and class, and highly dependent on highways and automobiles, has been blamed for increasing air-pollution, gobbling up farmland and wilderness, hastening disinvestment in central cities, atomizing traditional urban areas, and dividing society. Some have described this process as inevitable, or at least propelled by a combination of massive federal housing and highway policies, powerful local political coalitions, and tenacious market forces. Yet, in metropolitan Portland, and in Oregon more widely, political leaders, planners, and citizens have combined to mount the most effective assault so far on the forces behind "sprawl."

In the legend of Oregon land use planning, the patron saint of sprawl-fighting was the late Governor Tom McCall. He spoke out about the threat to Oregon's treasured landscape that was presented by unfettered real estate development. He led the fight in Oregon for state Senate Bill 100 in a fashion typical of Oregon's "moralistic" political culture. The prevailing land use practices weren't merely costly to Oregon society. They were morally wrong. McCall railed against the "grasping wastrels" of suburban development and "coastal condomania" and prevailed in the passage of Senate Bill 100 (Abbott, "The Oregon Planning Style," 208).

The need to act, both to protect rural areas and to make cities more livable, was also understood at the grass-roots level. Citizens worried about the effects of sprawl organized as "1,000 Friends of Oregon," not only helping push through the legislation, but working toward its implementation, and protecting it from attacks over the succeeding decades. Implementation of the new land use controls required a long process of goal-setting in an extensive series of public meetings and hearings throughout the state. The strength of this publicly-generated consensus has not only given political legitimacy to land use regulation in general, but has allowed the implementation of the Portland metropolitan area's Urban Growth Boundary—a legal device for the control of sprawl that would be inconceivable in most other cities.

Again, professional planners have played a central, if relatively low-profile role in these developments. Senate Bill 100 not only became Oregon's new land-use law, but it required the creation of a substantial state-wide agency, the Land Use Control and Development Commission, as well as stronger municipal and planning agencies to implement the law at the local level. This new cadre of professional planners became the bureaucratic advocates of the new law, just as 1,000 Friends were the political advocates for the law and the values behind it.

Abbott ("Urban Design") has identified this process of evolution in a number of realms of planning in Oregon. In regard to urban design issues, he saw periods when issues were raised on an ad hoc basis; later when issues were made the subject of policy; and still later when policies were transformed into bureaucratic regimes. We can see, more generally, that issues have been raised initially through a process of protest or insurgency against established practices; later, an accommodation is made to include the insurgents in the decision-making process; and once having carried the day, the ideas of the insurgents are incorporated into bureaucratic practice and institutionalized. Abbott subsequently points out that once having been made bureaucratic, the new land use practices lose some contact with the democratic political impulses that created them in the first place. He suggests the time is now ripe for the regime of land use planning in Oregon to renew its mandate by returning to the citizens. In any case, the life-cycle of insurgency, incorporation, and bureaucratization is well-defined in Portland planning (Abbott, "The Oregon Planning Style").

Two other events in the history of Portland regional planning illustrate how the achievements of one generation shape the possibilities for what the next generation may try to do. In the early 1970s residents in Southeast Portland organized to fight the plan to build a new expressway through their neighborhoods on its way to the suburbs. Construction would have required demolition of nearly two thousand homes and would have divided and degraded their neighborhoods. The residents were joined in opposition to the plan by Goldschmidt, a young city commissioner, soon to become mayor. Goldschmidt argued, not only that the highway would ruin those neighborhoods, but that it would damage downtown and exacerbate sprawl. In this sense, the broadest goals of planning in Portland—to strengthen the center, to preserve neighborhoods, and to prevent sprawl—came together in a single controversy. The highway was stopped and Goldschmidt worked for the rest of his tenure as mayor to "trade-in" the highway money to build a fixed-rail transit line (Abbott, *Portland*, 197, 257). Portland's success in this case became a precedent for other cities, and one of the basic principles behind the federal transportation law known as ISTEA—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1990 which allows localities flexibility in how they apply federal transportation funds.

Opposition to a second highway proposal about two decades later illustrated both the increased political power of those pursuing a certain vision of a more livable Portland and their growing technical and bureaucratic

savvy. While the Mt. Hood Freeway battle was fought on more or less conventional political grounds, opposition to a proposed highway by-pass in Washington County in the late 1980s was prosecuted on the exotic turf of regional transportation modeling. In brief, transportation planners in the state bureaucracy presented an argument for the highway based on a technical model of future traffic demand and capacity. Citizens groups, including 1,000 Friends of Oregon, entered the controversy to insist that the evaluation of alternatives—including alternatives involving no new road—be based on a model that reflected the interrelationships among highway capacity, traffic demand, land use and air quality. Such a model would accommodate the argument of the opponents that the highway would not simply satisfy new traffic demand, but would facilitate land use patterns that would increase demand, and in the process, worsen air quality. As it turned out, the proposal was set aside for other reasons, but the case was remarkable for showing how far Portland had developed the argument over the appropriate interrelationship between planning and participation (Bianco and Adler).

Structure, Agency and Utopia

One way of understanding how Portland has done what it has done is through Giddens's theory of "structuration" (1979). One of the continuing debates in social theory concerns the relationship between social structures and human agency. Some, notably certain Marxists, argue that social structures largely determine what can or cannot be accomplished through political or social action. Others argue that human agency—the forces of resistance to social structure—are what count the most in creating change. What is the appropriate balance between the two is still a matter of great controversy. Giddens, however, argues that the answer to the theoretical debate is not to strike a balance between the two concepts, but to understand structure and agency as part of a single process. As Katznelson explains on Giddens's behalf, "Social structure and agency cannot exist apart from each other. In that social structures enable human action and, at once, are the effects of such action, the usual structure-agency dichotomy is profoundly misleading. Social structure does not exist apart from practices, nor practices without an embeddedness in structured relationships" (Katznelson, 87–88). Instead, Giddens proposes the idea of "structuration" which encompasses both poles of the structure-agency dualism. Social structures are real and place real constraints on human agency. But human agency is also real and has the power to transform social structures. What comes before shapes what we do. But what we do shapes what comes after. The noun becomes the verb and the verb becomes the noun.

In the Portland context, at least, it is possible to suggest three categories of action which propel this process of structuration: material acts of design, building or preservation; acts of organizational or institutional development; and discursive or communicative acts. By acting materially, organizationally, or communicatively, people can begin to oppose the structural context

in which they now live and shape their future context, which is the essence of the utopian project, as I see it. The actions people take now help transform the conditions under which those in the future will act.

Over the course of several decades, the material acts of maintenance, preservation, renovation, design and construction have not only advanced the utopian vision of a more livable Portland, they have created the conditions for the further pursuit of the vision. They have done this both because the physical environment helps produce the social relations that structure further action, and more simply, because they set a tangible precedent for what might be in the future. Portland's east side light rail line created a public social space unlike the space that would have been created had the Mt. Hood Freeway been built instead. Pioneer Courthouse Square is an even more profound public space, not only serving as a physical symbol of the larger civic community, but also helping produce real, face-to-face relationships among fellow citizens. Had the site been developed as a parking garage, it is unlikely that the same relationships, or the same consciousness of community, would have been created. The Northwest District stands today as a prototype of the dense and diverse urban neighborhood that practitioners of the "new urbanism" would like to create. At the same time it is a physical manifestation and producer of the "sense of community" that Portland's urban pioneers have been seeking all these years. It would be an assertion beyond the grasp of social science, but all of these things are part of the social relations which produce Portland's unusual place-oriented democracy. In any case, Portlanders seem to understand the importance of the physical community in nourishing the social community. No element of the urban environment is too small to draw their attention, no element too big to write off as beyond their influence, because all of it matters. And, at the very least, the quality of the physical environment stands as precedent for what might come after. Having built Tom McCall Park on the bed of the old Harbor Freeway, it was difficult for some during the Central City Plan process not to consider tearing out other highways along the urban waterfront. One action, one decision, set the structural context for the next.

Likewise, organizational acts of community organizing, and institution building, as well as rule-making and process-construction, have both changed the way that public deliberations over public issues are carried out, and set the conditions for those deliberations to have different outcomes in the future. Not only did the creation and federation of neighborhood associations in Portland create a forum for political action that had never existed before, citizens acting through those associations forced changes in the rules by which public issues would be considered. They insisted, not only that neighborhood associations were a legitimate form of civic action, but forced those previously in power to cede them a seat at the table. Today in Portland it is inconceivable to undertake any kind of planning or development enterprise without seeking out citizen representatives and getting them involved. Because the rules have been changed, the agenda has also been changed, and so have the potential outcomes. These organizational acts also included

the use of land use planning and urban design controls as practices with the force of law behind them. Acts of building and tearing down which previously had been the result of purely private decisions suddenly were thrust into the public realm and made subject to democratic processes. Neighborhood associations have intervened in zoning and land use regulation issues, and interest groups have weighed in on regional planning matters. Groups like 1,000 Friends of Oregon have proliferated, giving an institutionalized voice to a wide array of perspectives. Over time, these citizen initiatives have created the new organizational landscape in which issues involving the urban environment emerge, and are heard, shaped, and decided.

Finally, Portland has pursued its implicit utopian vision through discursive acts, the verbal and symbolic expressions which are not merely words, but have the power to shape public consciousness of what is appropriate, desirable and possible. Taken together, these discursive acts both express and enforce Portland's vision of a more livable community, and the roles that leadership, participation, professional planning and the continuous challenging of structural constraints should play in pursuit of it. One set of these discursive acts is mainly, but not wholly, descriptive. For example, when Portlanders say that nothing ever happens in their community without citizen participation, they are stating what they understand to be a fact. But at the same time, they are also setting a norm to which the community should also adhere. When they talk about the frequency of transit service or the quality of downtown spaces they are also affirming, not just describing, these things.

The more powerful discursive acts in support of the Portland's implicit utopian project, however, can be found in the stories they tell about themselves. The fight against the Mt. Hood Freeway or the citizen mobilization to build Pioneer Courthouse Square are, in part, stories about the value of democratic participation in urban planning. The removal of the Harbor Freeway from the Willamette riverfront and the push for a statewide land use planning law are stories about the necessity of visionary leadership in pursuit of an implicit utopian vision. The story about the rescue of the Central City Plan or about using transportation modeling to incorporate new assumptions about the connections between infrastructure and land use are stories about the value of professional planning expertise and the relationship between that expertise and citizen participation. And most of the stories—about saving neighborhoods, rejuvenating downtown, developing transit, reining in suburban growth, and all those already mentioned—are centrally about challenging the structural constraints which are assumed to limit what we can do to make our cities better.

In Portland's case, many of those structural constraints have been transformed and overcome, step by step, and over many years, through material acts and organizational acts, through leadership, democratic participation and professional practice, but also through creating a new story and telling it over and over again. They live the story and then they tell it. Or, if they weren't directly involved in the story in the first instance, they tell the story

anyway. In so doing, either way, they propel the story forward. One cannot slay the dragon if you do not cross the river, traverse the forest, and climb the mountain to get to the dragon's cave. Each episode makes the next one possible. So does telling the story, because how would people even believe you could slay a dragon unless you told the tale?

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